

stay in contact. The boys told me that while they don't agree on everything they still work together to find a solution to whatever problem may arise, they are able to work it out.

Mr. Speaker, whether they are Arab or Jew, Greek or Turkish, Protestant or Catholic, Indian or Pakistani, bringing people together will achieve a lasting return in understanding and toleration.

I firmly believe that by working together, conflict can be overcome. The United States Congress, and our country should continue to support these people to people partnerships, which lay the groundwork for cooperation, co-existence and ultimately peace in the future.

TRIBUTE TO FRED AND ROXY LIGRANI

HON. SCOTT MCINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 18, 2003

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise today to recognize Fred and Roxy Ligrani of Grand Junction, Colorado. As farmers, Fred and Roxy have spent six decades working tirelessly to feed their fellow countrymen. They are making a difference in their community and touching the lives of their many neighbors in the Grand Valley. I would like to honor their accomplishments today before this body of Congress and this nation.

For the Ligrani brothers, farming runs in their blood; they grew up tending vegetables. Fred and Roxy's grandfather, Rocco, bought land in Grand Junction and developed it as a homestead in 1906. Respect and appreciation for the land, as well as knowledge of how best to cultivate it, are a rich heritage that the Ligrani family passes on from generation to generation.

Fred and Roxy's dedication to farming is evident from their customer's loyalty. The Ligranis have been recognized by American Vegetable Grower Magazine three times in the past. Even as the Grand Valley becomes urbanized, the Ligrani brothers remain focused on producing quality produce. They have maintained this dedication for 60 years.

Mr. Speaker, Fred and Roxy Ligrani have shown an extraordinary dedication to the citizens of Grand Junction. Their strenuous efforts offer hope to a world that is increasingly dependent on technology. These two talented and determined men are a shining example of the rewards of hard work and perseverance. It is my great honor to recognize the Ligranis before this body of Congress and this nation today. I wish them all the best in the future.

TRIBUTE TO MR. CHARLES P. IVERSEN

HON. BILL PASCRELL, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 18, 2003

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I would like to call your attention to an exceptional individual who I have long been proud to call my friend, Mr. Charles P. Iversen. On Friday, November 21, 2003, members of the Plumber's Union Local No. 14 will celebrate Charlie Iversen's

retirement from the union by coming together to pay tribute to Charlie and his lifelong commitment to and leadership in the labor movement.

Over the past 45 years, Charlie Iversen has worked tirelessly on behalf of the men, women, and families in Plumber's Local No. 14. Using his administrative experience and talent for creative leadership to greatly improve the work environment and expand the business interests for plumbers throughout Northern New Jersey, Charlie has left an indelible mark on the lives of many, demonstrating the positive difference that a single person can make. It is therefore only fitting that he be recognized in this, the permanent record of the greatest freely elected body on earth.

In 1955, Charlie Iversen embarked upon what would become a distinguished career in the field of plumbing engineering when he took a position with William Zabransky Jr., Inc. During his time in the employ of William Zabransky, Charlie joined Local No. 326 as an Apprentice, and pursued certification in a UA Training Program at Purdue University. Upon his graduation from Purdue, he became an instructor at Plumber's Local No. 14 Training School while continuing to augment his own personal education at Kean College, Rutgers University, William Paterson College, and Fairleigh Dickinson University.

In 1982, after 27 years as an esteemed employee of William Zabransky, Jr., Inc., Charlie was elected to the position of Business Agent of Plumber's Local No. 14. In this capacity, Charlie exhibited his diligence as an administrator and his boundless enthusiasm as a spokesman for the business interests of Local No. 14, leading him to be named the Union's Business Manager/Administrator in 1996.

Perhaps most inspiring is the way in which Charlie Iversen has balanced his love for his work with his interest in furthering the cause of the labor movement. As an active member of the American Society of Plumbing Engineers, a former Vice President of the New Jersey State Association of Pipe Trades, a Trustee of Plumber's Local No. 14 Pension, Welfare, Education, and Annuity Funds, and a Treasurer of Local No. 14's Political Action Committee, Charlie has worked hard to ensure that members of Local No. 14 receive the representation and benefits that they deserve. Through word and deed, Charlie has spent the last 45 years demonstrating that the only real success in life comes from a whole-hearted commitment to serving the members of the community in which you live and work.

Mr. Speaker, the job of a United States Congressman involves so much that is rewarding, yet nothing compares to recognizing the extraordinary efforts of individuals like Charlie Iversen. I ask that you join our colleagues, the members of the Plumber's Union Local No. 14, Charlie's family and friends, and me in recognizing Charles P. Iversen for his outstanding service to the families of Local 14.

TRIBUTE TO THE ALTOONA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

HON. BILL SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 18, 2003

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Altoona Symphony Orchestra

on its 75th Anniversary and to thank the organization for the high-quality music with which it has provided its community.

The Gearhart String Ensemble was founded in the early years of the twentieth century upon the tradition of the early railroad bands and orchestras that were abundant throughout central Pennsylvania at that time. In 1928, the then strictly volunteer orchestra compiled of 24 musicians made its debut under the direction of Russell Gearhart. Since then, it has grown to employ more than 75 musicians and was renamed the Altoona Symphony Orchestra.

Although 75 years have passed, the orchestra maintains its youthful fervor with its diverse repertoire and inspiring attitude. The constantly changing roster of nationally and internationally renowned guest artists renders a different sound for every concert, keeping the audience attentive and entertained. With this vast array of musical talent, the symphony orchestra provides an invaluable cultural experience to the communities of Central Pennsylvania through its mastery of classical music pieces.

The orchestra continues to produce music that rivals the masterful and highly acclaimed sound of the Boston Pops, and is recognized as one of the outstanding Pennsylvania symphony orchestras. As a result of the dedicated, hard work of its Board of Trustees, the orchestra has progressed immensely, and it will undoubtedly continue to do so under its guidance and leadership. I congratulate the Altoona Symphony Orchestra on a wonderful 75 years and look forward to its sounds of tomorrow.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LUIS V. GUTIERREZ

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 18, 2003

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably absent from this Chamber on November 17, 2003. I would like the record to show that, had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall votes 620, 621, 622 and 623.

HONORING SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA FIRE FIGHTERS

HON. HILDA L. SOLIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 18, 2003

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about the courage of fire fighters from Los Angeles County Fire Department. Firefighters in my community, from the cities of Azusa, Baldwin Park, Bradbury, Claremont, Covina, Duarte, El Monte, Glendora, Irwindale, Rosemead, San Dimas, South El Monte, Temple and Unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County, fought the fires and saved the lives and homes of countless people. Had it not been for the rapid response and bravery of firefighters, the loss of life, the damage to residents, housing, and commercial property would have been much worse.

I am hopeful that if we learn one lesson from this horrible disaster, it will be that more